GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING
LOK SABHA

STARRED QUESTION NO:436
ANSWERED ON:25.08.2005
POLICY FOR TV BROADCASTERS
Singh Shri Rajiv Ranjan (Lalan);Suman Shri Ramji Lal

Will the Minister of INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING be pleased to state:

(a) whether any policy has been laid down for Television Broadcasters in the country;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether the Government has formulated a separate policy for the foreign companies;

(d) if so, the results thereof; and

(e) the reasons for formulating separate policies for the domestic and foreign companies?

Answer

THE MINISTER OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING & CULTURE (SHRI S. JAIPAL REDDY)

(a) to (e) : A Statement is laid on the Table of the House.

STATEMENT REFERRED TO IN REPLY TO PARTS (a) to (e) OF LOK SABHA STARRED QUESTION NO.436 FOR ANSWER ON 25.8.2005

(a) & (b) : The Government has formulated a policy for granting permission to Television Broadcasters to uplink TV channels. Any Company desirous of uplinking a TV channel has to be registered under the Companies Act in India. The eligibility criteria for News and Current Affairs TV channels, inter alia, prescribes that Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) in the applicant company shall not exceed 26% of the Paid-up Equity; permission will be granted only in cases where equity held by the largest Indian shareholder is at least 51% of the paid up equity; at least 3/4th of the Directors on the Board of Directors and all key Executives and Editorial Staff shall be resident Indians; the representation on the Board shall as far as possible be proportionate to the shareholding; and CEO of the applicant company and/or Head of the channel shall be a resident Indian . There are no equity restrictions on the companies applying for non-News and Current Affairs TV channels.

(c) to (e) : Foreign companies are not eligible to uplink a TV channel from India. However, the foreign companies/TV channels are considered for temporary uplinking from time to time on a case to case basis. Foreign Companies who are uplinking their TV channels from abroad and downlinking and telecasting in India are proposed to be covered under the Downlinking Guidelines, which are under active consideration of the government.